

Gossip from Hut 12, Room 1.

During the two days' C.B. that came to us with the test mobilization, there were more than a few of the lads in our sanctum sanctorum who were restless. Sunday afternoon and evening was not so bad—that is for most of us. Poor Faulner found it hard to exercise Christian patience and was heard to mutter at intervals: "My goodness gracious!" punctuated with deep sighs. It must be distressing to miss Evening Service as well as Sunday School, not to mention tea and supper—and other delights.

When Monday evening came, however, and the C.B. was not lifted, it seemed to be getting a bit thick. A musical concert was on in the T.D. Mess, but the organisers forgot to send invitations to Hut 12. However, that did not bother us. Our Irishman was in good form. For an hour he entertained the Fireside Pets with song, jig, and story. Sans doute he is the dean of entertainers. Our difficulty was in suppressing our chortles of glee when a rapid transition of repertoire took us from the side-splitting humour of an Irish song to the sublime pathos of high tragedy. Undoubtedly, the doyen of the program was his song of the little girl who prayed the seagull to take a message to her Daddy out on the big, big ship.

When Tommy played out, Mac, the best little tenor in our Church, entertained us with a few songs. After that we Pets—tous ensembles—joined in close harmony to Ye Olde Ballads. It was quite some evening. As Faulner says: "It's so nice to have the boys together for an evening like that."

6.30 in the morning is the hour that tests the soldier. Our Irishman (we have only one real Hibernian left) sets us all an example when he arises—or lies in bed—and pours forth his full soul in profuse strains of unpremeditated art." There might be doubts about the "art," for a few of the boys have been known to throw boots, but that might have been just ordinary jealousy.

Pinky (alias Bill) is not Irish—would to heaven that he were. Pinky invariably rises with a volume of vitriolic

vituperation on his lips—but it doesn't stay there long. He knows our ears are from habit inclined his way to catch the first loud boom that warns us the attack is on. "Who is the long-eared son of a dog-fish that pulled all the windows down?" You might have difficulty in locating this oracle with a voice like Jove if you were not trained to look for two pink little ears against the grey blanket. In a few moments he is up and booming forth "Instructions to young soldiers," or "How to clean a Barrack Room as it should be did." No one, listening to Pinky's didactic dithyrambics, would imagine he was the little seraph who goes to bed singing: "Daddy, will you meet us in the land where the Angels dwell." Pinky's gaff would be a good healthy tonic, if he didn't so frequently interlard it with phrases meant to white-wash his own sepulchre, or is it platter—if not, perhaps it is kit-shelf.

Smoky and Cam are "looking forward" to making their home on Loud Hill. They say Reveille doesn't blow there.

Smoky returned from his Cook's Tour to France just when we were beginning to think that the vacant bed would stay vacant. Somebody started a rumour that he had gone to Mesopotamia to drive a Staff car, and Cam was just preparing to appropriate his spare Kit as compensation for one "British warm" when the gentleman rolled in. He brought back interesting stories of his adventures and a wonderful knowledge of French, considering his short visit. One of his phrases was a puzzler though. It was almost as hard to recognise his "Hotel Dee-vil" as it is to make out what the local bus-drivers mean by "T'an 'All."

There was consternation in the room when Smoky pictured his last sight of the Sergeants whom he had taken over with him. These men, part of a body whom an ex-O.C. termed "the backbone of the Corps," now shorn of their insignia and as crestfallen as roosters robbed of spurs, wandered round the Camp spearing bits of paper on pointed sticks. How have the mighty fallen!